

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time under the control of the minority has expired.

The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for a few moments as in morning business on my amendment that will be voted on at 11.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PEPFAR

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I wish to take a few minutes to speak on the rather large foreign aid bill we are addressing this week in the Senate. I have already expressed my concern, and I will do it again.

As the Senator from Texas was just talking about, we have a serious energy problem in our country today. Americans are hurting, and it is probably not a very good time to be talking about sending billions of American dollars around the world, despite how good the cause may be. Nevertheless, we are going to be voting on various amendments related to what we call PEPFAR, which began as an aid to Africa bill, and that is one of the issues I wish to address this morning.

The PEPFAR Program that the President started in 2003, which I supported, took \$15 billion over 5 years and focused it on the AIDS epidemic in Africa. Other countries were allowed to participate. The primary focus was on AIDS and malaria. There has been some success, so the President would like to reauthorize that program.

Unfortunately, as it has worked its way through Congress, it has gone from a \$15 billion expenditure to a \$50 billion expenditure, sending more money overseas than we spend ourselves on research for AIDS in America or breast cancer or juvenile diabetes and the problems we have here. We are sending the money overseas.

This bill does not go according to its label anymore. This is no longer an aid to Africa bill. It expands across three more continents, including China and other countries that might be better off financially than we are at this point.

I proposed an amendment to limit the scope of the PEPFAR bill to its original intent, which included Africa and other authorized countries in the original bill, so that we can focus these dollars in a way that would allow them to work rather than allow them to create a global fund that spreads the money so thin that we are no longer effective in any area.

The vote at 11 also includes a very important amendment that is attached to the amendment to keep the focus on the countries in the original bill. This amendment would prohibit PEPFAR funds from going to organizations that are involved with forced abortions and forced sterilization in countries such as

China. Again, countries such as China don't need our money, particularly at a time when they are actually much better off financially than we are. American taxpayers should not be forced to send their money to organizations in China that force abortions.

We may have people who stand up and say this is not going to happen, but \$2 billion in the first year of this program is designated to the U.N. Global Fund. It is indicated that such sums that would be spent over the next 4 years would be allocated to it, which means it is likely that there is going to be \$10 billion over 5 years that goes to the U.N. Global Fund. All one has to do is go to the Global Fund Web site, go to China, and see that there is over \$70 million in grants that has gone to the organization in China that actually enforces the one-child policy, enforces the forced abortion policy in China. The law of the land here in this country is that we don't use taxpayer dollars for forced abortions anywhere in the world. Actually, the PEPFAR bill itself prohibits those funds. Yet there is a loophole in that as funds from PEPFAR go to the U.N. Global Fund, they will go to organizations such as we have in China that are involved in forced abortions.

Some of my colleagues will say this is unnecessary; it is already the law. If it is, I hope they will go along with this amendment and support it and not vote to table it this morning. This is a very real and serious problem. The U.N. Global Fund is very well known for supporting organizations in China and elsewhere that promote forced abortions and forced sterilization on women. This is not only an abortion issue; it is a human rights issue that we all need to stand up and support.

So as we head to 11 o'clock, I wish to remind my colleagues again, because sometimes we confuse so many things together here that people don't know what we are voting on. The majority leader has moved to table my amendment—the amendment that says we can't add three new continents to this bill—because he knows that attached to it is this amendment that would prohibit funds from being used for forced abortions. The whole reason for the big debacle we had here in the Senate last Friday where people were brought back late is because the majority leader would not allow me to offer this amendment that would prohibit taxpayer dollars from being used for forced abortions in China and other places in the world.

So this is a very important vote at 11 o'clock. My colleagues need to know that if they vote to table my amendment, they are voting to do two things. First, they are voting to divert funds from this Africa fund and other countries that were authorized in the first bill—the countries that are suffering from widespread epidemics—they will be voting to divert these funds to countries where there are very isolated problems. The money will ultimately

be spread around the world to organizations that waste this money instead of focusing it where we can really make a difference. Also, voting to table this amendment means you are supporting using PEPFAR funds, which are supposed to be for AIDS in Africa, you are supporting using those funds to promote forced abortions and forced sterilization in China and in other countries.

So I want my colleagues to be clear. I am not sure how the majority leader and others will present this motion to table, but the reason they are attempting to table it is because they want to stop the amendment that would not allow these funds to be used through the U.N. Global Fund to organizations in China that promote forced abortion. So I urge my colleagues to vote no—to vote no to table this amendment on these amendments so they can receive a fair vote in the Senate.

With that, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AERIAL REFUELING

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I have come to the floor this morning to raise a very important concern. As all of my colleagues are aware, our Nation's aerial refueling tanker fleet is aging and badly in need of repair and replacement. We are in the process of selecting a new plane right now that can serve our military for 40 years or even more. Those tankers are the backbone of our global military. They are stationed today throughout the world, and they refuel aircraft from every branch of the Armed Forces. I think everyone would agree, especially in a time of war, that as we work to replace that fleet, there is nothing more important than buying the best planes for our men and women and for our taxpayers.

Last month, in its decision sustaining Boeing's protest of the competition, the Government Accountability Office found that the Air Force made significant errors when it evaluated the bids by Boeing and the European company Airbus. The GAO found that the competition was skewed toward Airbus even though Airbus failed to meet even basic requirements of that contract.

I was pleased last week when the Pentagon announced that it would rebid the contest and take over the selection process. I had hoped it would ensure that we finally hold a fair and transparent competition and get this contract right. But instead of a fair do-over, I am concerned that it appears